

<sup>2.</sup>  
DISCOURSES

ON THE

CHIEF POINTS

OF

Practical CHRISTIANITY.

DISCOURSE I.

IN THREE PARTS.

The Necessity of being acquainted  
with our fallen State.

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The Necessity of being acquainted  
with our fallen State.

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JAMES IV. 6.

*God resisteth the Proud, but giveth Grace  
unto the Humble.*

## PART I.

**P**RIDE is a Principle that disposes us  
to *think of ourselves more highly than  
we ought.* In proportion to the Influence it has over us, either we do not discern real Defects, or we see them in too favourable a Light; are apt to fancy ourselves possessed of Attainments we are Strangers to; and overrate what is really valuable, because it is ours. To see our Defects as they are, and to measure, what appears to be praise-worthy, by the modest Rule of Truth, neither imagining good Qualities where they are not, nor esteeming

them too highly where they are, is to act under the Guidance of *Humility*. The Text confines these general Remarks to the peculiar Circumstances of Man's Estate towards God, and will have us to understand, that if we think of ourselves *above what we are* in respect of him, he *resists* us; but if our Judgment of ourselves be formed according to the Truth of our Case, we may hope for his Favour.

THE Importance of the Subject is evident, and should engage a careful Inquiry into it, which we propose to attempt in the following Method.

*First*, MAN is an apostate Creature.

*Secondly*, GOD has provided a Method of Recovery for apostate Man in a Redeemer.

*Thirdly*, IF Man be not sensible of his Apostasy, he cannot use this Method of Recovery, and must necessarily remain Apostate. Nevertheless,

*Fourthly*, PRIDE has an Influence with some to keep them ignorant of their Apostasy, while others are sensible of it. These are the *Humble*, those the *Proud*, intended by the Text.

*Fifthly*,



*Fifthly*, WHILE we are insensible of our apostasy, GOD *resists* us ; when we are duly sensible of it, he *gives* us *Grace*.

*First*, WE must lay our Foundation in this, that “ Man is an apostate Creature.” He is not now that perfect Being GOD made him, filled with the Knowledge of the divine Perfections, conformed to them in the Temper of his Soul, and bearing upon his Mind, Will, and Affections, the pure unfulfilled Impression of GOD’s Presence, Majesty, and Holiness. By the Sin of *Adam* our Nature has contracted every kind of carnal and spiritual Impurity, by which we have lost our primitive Innocence, and the original *Image of God*. By Nature we have no Sense of Dependence on GOD, nor any Thought of Enjoyment in him ; being set up for ourselves, and hurried away from the Creator to the Creature for Happiness, and every Means of it. The Scriptures are not wanting in their Testimony of this general Account of our present State of Apostasy : which, if it were not true, such a Revelation of Mercy as is contained in them would be altogether needless. To them we must refer. And it will be of moment to the Subject before us, that we enter into the most

interesting Particulars, given us in the Scriptures, of Man's present apostate State. Now,

1. THE Scriptures represent Man in his present State as "having lost the Power of  
" discerning spiritual Things in his Under-  
" standing." This St Paul asserts expressly, when writing to the converted *Ephesians* he cautions them thus; *Walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the Vanity of their Minds, having their Understanding darkened, being alienated from the Life of God through the Ignorance that is in them, because of the Blindness of their Hearts.* And soon after he puts them in remembrance, that they *were sometime Darkness.* He says also to *Titus*, that Unbelievers have *their Mind and Conscience defiled*; where he sets the *Mind* in contradistinction to the *Conscience*, and therefore can mean only by it the Judgment. Should it be said that these and the like Expressions, import only, that the Persons spoken of were without the Light of Revelation; such a Solution will but confirm the Point before us: for it grants, that Man without a Revelation is in Darkness; consequently owns, that by the Power of our own Reason we cannot discern spiritual Things. And that this is the very Truth of our Case appears from what is expressly said of the *Jews*, that *having Eyes they saw not*: they had the full Use of their reasoning Powers, and also of  
the

the Scriptures ; yet they *saw not*. What ! they would not ? Nay, but also they *could* not without a divine Illumination. Consult the sixth Chapter of *Isaiab*, and you will find the Truth of the Matter was, they had resisted the Light of the Spirit which had been shining around them ; therefore it was judicially taken from them. The Consequence was this, With their Bibles in their Hands, and in the full Exercise of their Reason, they remained in Darkness ; *they heard, but did not understand ; they saw, but did not perceive*. The thing is indeed put out of dispute by our Lord, who evidently ascribes all Discernment of spiritual Things to the Operations of the holy Ghost on our Minds. *These Things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. And again, When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth. And once more, He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* Expressions like these are abundant Testimonies of the Blindness of our Hearts ; and we need go no farther than the Apostles themselves to be convinced, that the plainest Declarations of divine Truths will not make the Truths themselves perceived without the

inward Teachings of the holy Ghost. In effect, what do all Petitions offered up in Prayer for divine Light and Direction imply, but the Darkness and Blindness of our unassisted Minds? Think we *David* would have called so often and earnestly upon God to *teach* him, if he had not perceived Darkness overspreading his Soul, unless the Spirit of GOD were shining upon it?

2. THE Scriptures represent Man as "*sinful and guilty.*" It was this that occasioned the giving out of the Law. Had Man been perfect, the whole of the Law had been within him, and an explicit Discovery of it entirely needless. To what End should a moral Rule be given to the holy Angels, that are already in perfect Conformity to GOD's Nature and Will? *Adam* in Innocence had no moral Precept given him: the Law of Love was inscribed on his Heart, neither could he in any sort depart from it, without acting contrary to his Nature. The Necessity of a revealed Law arose out of the Fall of Man, his Sinfulness and Guilt; that by bringing our Nature and Conduct to a perfect Rule, we might discern the Truth of our Case, see the Cause of our present Misery in Sin, and be duly apprehensive of the future Consequences of our Apostasy, lying beyond the Grave. The Gospel speaks the same Language. Every Promise of it sup-  
poses



poses our Sin and Guilt, without which any Gospel-Promise had been superfluous. Numberless Declarations of Scripture join their Voices with the Law and Gospel against us, and loudly proclaim our Sinfulness and Guilt. Let us only hear St Paul citing David in proof of this, which, if any thing be so, is plain in the Scriptures. *There is none righteous, no not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the Way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one.*

3. THE Scriptures also represent Man as “*without any Power to do good.*” They give us to understand, there is a Principle in us, which they call *the Flesh, in which dwelleth no good thing.* They intitle this Principle *the Law of Sin*: ascribing the Power of a Law to it, because it gives Direction to all the Desires of our Heart; and terming it *the Law of Sin*, because it directs our Desires only to what is sinful. They set forth this Principle of Sin as ceaselessly active in Man, causing *every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart to be only evil continually.* They tell us, it has a Force that nothing can restrain but the Power of God; for they assure us, that *it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good Pleasure.* They would make us sensible of its exceeding Ob-

stinacy and Stubbornness, infomuch that when *the Spirit lusteth against it, we cannot do the things that we would*; so inveterate are its Lustings on the contrary part, and so mighty its Influence. Such is the Scripture Account of the Propensity of Man's Nature to Evil. And where then is his Ability to Good? The great Apostle found he had none. In the bitter Experience of that malignant *Law of Sin* which was *in his Members*, we hear him crying out with Vehemence, *O wretched Man that I am! who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death?*

WE see now what is the scriptural Character of Man. And if GOD's Estimate of us is, that we are apostate Creatures, *blind, sinful, and without Strength*, there is no contending, reasonably, that such is not indeed our Condition.

*Secondly*, "GOD has provided a Method  
 "for our Recovery out of this apostate State,  
 "exactly suited to the Misery and Helpless-  
 "ness of Man." The Redemption that is  
 in *Christ Jesus* presents us with all that apo-  
 state Creatures can need. In the whole, and  
 in the parts, of that adorable Contrivance,  
 Wisdom has made such ample Provision,  
 that we cannot have lost any thing in the  
*first Adam*, which we may not recover with  
 Advantage in the *second*. It is not my busi-  
 ness

ness for the present to illustrate the Sufficiency of this Scheme of Redemption, neither is it necessary to set about proving the Truth of it. The former I shall have occasion to do in another Discourse: the latter is, I conceive, needless. Let the Gospel speak for itself. The Marks of Truth are so pregnant and evident, that they will not fail of making themselves known to an honest, candid Mind. And to what End should we meddle with a disingenuous Disputer? when we are assured no one can be convinced of the Truth of Revelation, but by Revelation itself. It is at present sufficient to observe, that the Scriptures declare the Gospel-Salvation to be a complete Remedy for us, whether we consider our Apostasy in general, or in the most essential Branches of it. Nothing can be more general than such a Declaration as this; *For this Purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.* And again, *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* The Particulars above alledged are all provided for in this one Text; *Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.* But,

. Thirdly,

*Thirdly*, “IF Man be not sensible of his  
 “Apostasy, he cannot use this Method of  
 “Recovery, and must necessarily remain  
 “apostate.” I cannot think of a Return,  
 nor accept the Offer of a friendly Hand to  
 bring me back, till I find myself out of the  
 Way. The Gospel is a Remedy for blind,  
 guilty, helpless Apostates, and therefore can  
 be of no Service to us, till we are sensible  
 that we are such. Till that Time we must  
 remain in our Apostasy and Rebellion, how-  
 ever fearful that State be in itself, and how-  
 ever formidable in its Consequences. Till  
 that Time our Rebellion subsists, and the  
 Gospel Remedy is neglected: we are inca-  
 pacitated from making Submission, and can-  
 not avail ourselves of any thing the Re-  
 deemer has done for us.

HERE it will be of importance that we  
 consider *Inexperience* and *Experience* of our  
 Blindness, Guilt, and Impotency, as severally  
 unfitting or fitting us for receiving the Grace  
 of the Gospel in those most vital Parts of it,  
 which render it a suitable Remedy for blind,  
 sinful, weak Creatures.

1<sup>st</sup>, “FALLEN Man being in the Dark,  
 “without Power in his rational Faculties to  
 “discern spiritual Things, is unfitted, while  
 “inexperienced herein, for receiving the  
 “Light of the Gospel.” He cannot receive  
 it.



it. He finds not that he wants it. He thinks he has Light another Way. If it be true that our depraved Understandings are darkened, and therefore GOD has undertaken to enlighten them by the Co-operation of an outward and inward Revelation, it is impossible for me to receive this divine Teaching, while I insist on the Sufficiency of my own Reason, and deny or am insensible of my natural Darknes. I must remain in Error: Having neither Object nor Faculty right; for the Word only presents the one, and the Spirit alone prepares the other. I must walk on still in Darknes, see no spiritual Thing as it is, always take Appearances for Truth, and labour in unsurmountable Uncertainty and Doubt: Reason as I will concerning GOD and myself, my Conclusion in relation to both will be wrong; and my brain-sick Inventions, like the Rovings of Madness, will be unsettled and unpracticable: Or if, as Madness sometimes does, they fix on a Point, it will be chimerical and without Foundation. The reasoning Faculty, depraved in itself, and blinded by ungoverned Affections, must take *Darknes for Light, and Light for Darknes*: And if we fancy ourselves wise enough without GOD's Teaching, we both exclude the Possibility of being led into the Knowledge of the Truth, and must unavoidably abide in Scepticism

ticism and Error. We tread in the Steps of the Idolaters of old, and fall down to Inventions formed by our own Imaginations ; *we do not know nor understand ; he hath shut our Eyes, that we cannot see ; and our Hearts, that they cannot understand : A deceived Heart hath turned us aside, that we cannot deliver our Souls, nor say, Is there not a Lie in my right Hand ?* — Strange ! that we should not see the Insufficiency of our reasoning Powers to discern spiritual Things, when the World is full of religious Debate, when GOD has given us the Scripture, and promised us the Spirit to teach us : Neither of which would have been the Case, were Reason the sufficient Guide it is pretended to be.

IT must be an Acknowledgment of our own Blindness grounded on the Experience of our fallen State, that can fit and dispose us to be taught of GOD. *The Meek he will guide in Judgment ; and the Meek will he teach his Way :* Those that are lowly in their own Eyes, distrustful of themselves, and desirous to be taught, he will guide and teach by his Word and Spirit. The Promise, and the Disposition for receiving it, are here put together. *God will teach the Meek ;* the Self-diffident, whose Hearts are prepared for Instruction. GOD will teach them, because he has made them willing and desirous to be taught. Surely no others can be taught.  
Sub-

Submission to Instruction of any kind is impracticable, where there is not a Sense of Ignorance, and a teachable Temper; the latter of which cannot be attained, where the former is not experienced: but when they are united in the Search of divine Things, they make up the happy Disposition for being led into all Truth. When, sensible we can discover nothing of spiritual Things but what we are told, we apply to Revelation; and, sensible we can discern nothing therein aright, and to effectual Purpose, because of the Blindness of our Minds, and the Corruption of our Hearts, without the Illumination of the holy Spirit; we wait for his enlightening Aid: No Doubt can be made, we are duly disposed to be *taught of God*, and are in the sure Way of being so taught by him.

2. As Inexperience of our natural Blindness indisposes us for receiving the Light of the Gospel, so doth “ Ignorance of our Sinfulness and Guilt unfit us for accepting the “ Forgiveness of it.” Shall we suppose some so besotted as to think seriously they need no Forgiveness, yea rather, that they have a fair Claim to GOD’s Favour for Services done him? What! have they never sinned? have they always done the Things that please GOD? Why then does GOD punish them by so many Calamities? Why do they  
sicken,

sicken, and pine, and die, as do others? Is God unjust? is he cruel? or is it that *Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned, in Adam, and in their own Persons, if grown to Years?* To talk of Forgiveness to these, is to send a *Physician to those that are whole.* But we may own, that in many Things we have offended and do offend; and yet by narrowing the Sense of the Law to a literal Meaning; by making no Account of the Corruption of our Nature, otherwise than to draw Excuse from it for many Things we cannot so well justify; and by setting off what seems to have been done well, against what we are sensible has been amiss; we may maintain a tolerable Opinion of ourselves, and remain incapable of Gospel-Pardon, in the Ignorance of our Want of it. Forgiveness is for the Guilty, the Condemned. We disavow our being guilty, we do not suspect any Condemnation is due to us; how then can we sue for Mercy or accept a Pardon? Wretched Mistake! which makes *Christ* to have died in vain; which excludes us from all the saving Benefits of the Redeemer's Blood. What a Pity it is, that when we are Sinners, guilty, sentenced to everlasting Death, we should thro' Ignorance be led along in a careless Neglect  
of



of that Salvation, without which we shall soon perish for ever!

UNPARDONED, and unfitted for receiving the offered Pardon, we must abide, till the Truth of our Case is made known. When this is done, and the Guilt and Misery of an apostate State is evident, the Bar is taken away, and we stand ready to accept Forgiveness from the all-gracious Hand that offers it. It is becoming the Majesty of GOD to confront the Rebel, who has not learned to tremble at the divine Indignation: it is no less becoming the same Lord of Lords, whom ten thousand times ten thousand Angels worship, to spare a prostrate Worm, to lift him up, and bid him live. It is the part of sinful Man to bow; when he does, Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment. The Publican stands in the proper Posture of a Sinner before his offended GOD, self-condemned, making no Excuse, owning Punishment is his Desert, pleading nothing but Mercy, he comes making his Confession and humble Suit. If GOD be disposed to forgive, where is so fit an Object, on whom to shew Forgiveness? If GOD be so gracious as to forgive, where is one more disposed to receive Forgiveness? The only Disposition for Forgiveness is the Sense of the Want of it; and the deeper the Sense of our Misery,  
the

the better are we disposed for receiving the pardoning Grace of the Gospel.

3. ALIKE obvious is it, that the “*In-  
“ experience or Experience of our own Weak-  
“ ness must unfit or fit us for receiving the  
“ Gospel Supplies of sanctifying Grace.”* Can we receive this Grace, when we do not think we need it? are we not prepared to receive it, when we find we can do nothing we wish to do, without it? Can we think we need it, when the Apostasy of our Nature is not known to us? When it is, are we not ready to accept all the friendly Aid the Spirit would give us? The Fitness or Unfitness is therefore in the Experience or Inexperience of the total Corruption of the Heart, its being naturally without all Godliness, pregnant with all Sin, and impotent to recover the one, or destroy the Dominion of the other. Hence on one part, he who is kept in Ignorance of his Apostasy, and consequently discerns nothing of the Nature of true Religion, and of his Insufficiency to perform it, talks slightly of, or denies the Necessity of divine Grace, as his Notions are: but whether he acknowledges or disowns its Necessity, can have no Dependence upon it, nor Disposition of Heart to receive it. He disowns, it may be, the Necessity of divine Grace: And he well may, since his Religion is merely external, shut up in the  
narrow

narrow Compass of Regularity, Decency, Civility, and Liberality ; which the Pride of Reputation can easily influence him to perform, and the Countenance of the World will bear him out in. Perhaps he owns the Necessity of it : But he does no more than own it. He finds no real Want of it ; nor has the least Trust in it. He knows not what he should do with that, which he contends is so necessary. *As* he prays, and *as* he lives, there is even no manner of need of it ; his Attendance are no Prayers, his Life is but the Shadow of Religion. He never saw the Necessity of a new Heart ; so his Prayers are but customary Services without Design, and his Life the Form of Religion without the Power. Whether orthodox or not in the Point, he has Strength enough of his own, for the scanty Religion he pretends to ; and being unacquainted with the Apostasy of his Nature, continues unfitted for the sanctifying Operations of the Spirit.

ON the other part, the Apostasy of Man's Nature being opened to view, and of course the Necessity of a regenerating Change, and progressive Renewal of the Heart, the experienced Soul utterly disclaims all Self-sufficiency, yet waits and wishes for the creating Power of GOD to effect it. And shall it be withholden, where it is wished and waited for, and the Heart lies open to receive  
it ?

it? When the Sinner is ready, shall the Saviour be backward? shall not the Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him? If any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me. The Promise standeth sure; the main Matter is, Does the Sinner depend on the Promise? do we hear GOD's Voice, and open the Door, he will come. Judge ye, if there can be any other Disposition for partaking of divine Grace.

## PART II.

**I**T has been made sufficiently evident, that Man is an apostate Creature, and that though GOD has provided a Remedy for him in the Gospel, yet he cannot avail himself of it, if he be insensible of his Apostasy. We proceed therefore to observe,

*Fourthly*, "THAT Pride has an Influence  
 " with some to keep them ignorant of their  
 " Apostasy, while others are sensible of it:  
 " The latter are *the Humble*, the former *the*  
 " *Proud*, intended in the Text." For if it  
 be Pride to think of myself above what I  
 really am, and Humility to have the Judgment  
 I make of myself formed according to  
 the Truth of my Case; and if, as has been  
 proved, I am an apostate Creature from GOD;  
 the



the Conclusion is plain, that on any false Shew and Pretence to think myself *something* in regard to GOD, while by that fair colouring the Blindness, Guilt, and Impotency of my fallen Condition is hid from me, is entirely to mistake my Case, and to judge of myself quite wrong in that instance, wherein I am peculiarly concerned to judge of myself aright. Whereas, if from a clear Conviction of my being an Apostate, I think and judge myself such, I see myself to be, what in truth I am, and my Judgment of myself is in conformity with the Judgment GOD has declared of me.

YET Pride has a strange Power of hiding from us our Apostasy, by puffing us up with the Conceit of many fair Appearances, insomuch that though we are no other, nor better, than blind, guilty, helpless Apostates, we may be easily imposed upon by it to fancy ourselves some great thing in Wisdom, Merit, and Self-sufficiency. Pride has so many fine Things of our own to present us, and such an Art in setting them off, that it will be difficult for the most humble to guard against them all, and to maintain all that Self-distrust which an apostate Condition so well warrants. Let us consider the lying Pretences of Pride, in this view, with Attention; and, at the same time, place on the other side the Discoveries of the humble  
in

in each of the Points produced, for the better Discernment of the one and other of these opposite Characters. And,

1. Let us consider Pride, as “boasting itself of the Sufficiency of Man’s *Reason*.” Reason indeed is the noblest Power we have; no wonder therefore, if we are most apt to be proud of it. But Reason is not the great thing it is made to be. Reason is but a naked Faculty of judging concerning such things, as are presented from without for Inquiry; you must furnish it with Materials, and farther than you do so, it cannot exert itself. And besides, Man’s Reason is not what it was; in itself it is impaired, while also a thousand Prejudices from the Principle of Sin, both keep the Light from it, and divert it in their Favour from judging aright of the spiritual Objects brought before it. But Pride will make Reason what it is not; either ascribing to it the Power of discerning divine Truths without any foreign Aid, and shamelessly denying the Obligations which natural Religion, so called, owes to Revelation and Tradition for its whole Foundation: Or preposterously subjecting the Wisdom of God to the Reason of Man, depraved as it is, by bringing revealed Truths to its Bar, to be measured by this same Figment of natural Religion; rejecting as absurd what does not come within Reason’s  
Line,

Line, and receiving, what it does receive of Revelation, not upon GOD's Authority (the sole Foundation of divine Faith in the very Nature of the thing) but because of its falling in with the System of religious Truths before formed in the Mind, and of its serving perhaps a little to clear up and enlarge it: Or attributing to Reason a Capacity of discerning spiritual things revealed, without a divine Illumination; a Capacity, which it cannot be proved the reasoning Faculty was possessed of even in the State of Perfection; but which if it then had, it entirely lost in the Fall of *Adam*. The proud Abusers of Reason in one or another of these ways are, alas! many. Abused Reason puts the self-sufficient Infidel upon disclaiming Revelation, and framing a System of Religion, to his thinking more reasonable, solely upon, as he supposes, the Stock of his own rational Inquiries. By too many others this best Gift of Heaven is set upon a Tribunal it does not pretend to, to try the Declarations of infinite Wisdom and Knowledge; to renounce as impossible, what Reason cannot comprehend; or to thrust out divine Testimony as of little importance to the Proof of Revelation, leaving *Christianity* no other Prop than the Wisdom of Man. *Unlearned* Pride also has its Share in the Abuse of Reason: Thousands, doubtless, never made

made sensible of their need to be *taught of God*, because of the Blindness of their Hearts, are reading the Scriptures in their own Sufficiency, and form, perhaps, from the Word of GOD dangerous Errors, or though they collect from it orthodox Opinions, they only float in the Head, but have no Power to animate the Heart, and influence their Conduct.

IT will be useful now to cast our Eyes on Humility in this respect. The Word of GOD is her Rule, for she wants one to guide her; GOD has given her the Scriptures, and she looks no farther. She is not curious to comprehend *secret things, which belong to God*; and is easily satisfied with what GOD tells her, because he saith it. She is too sensible of the weakness of her Head, and the badness of her Heart, to trust to her own Discernment in searching out the Mind of GOD in the Scriptures, and her Prayer is, with *David, Open thou mine Eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of thy Law*. She is not impatient of Contradiction, yet will believe nothing but what GOD says; neither will she impose her Judgment upon any, knowing they must *be taught of God*, if they learn any thing to the purpose. Her Bible lies before her; her Eyes are toward Heaven, and the Language of her Heart is, *Lead me in thy Truth, and teach me*. In short,



short, Humility is always a Child, knows nothing but what she is taught, is willing to be taught any thing ; but is acquainted with the Voice of JESUS, the true Shepherd, and will follow none but him. Such a meek and lowly Spirit, where the Pride of Reason is dethroned, and from Experience of its Ignorance, Blindness, and Darkness, the Soul is brought quietly to subject every Thought to the Law of *Christ*, is not easily attained, is perhaps the most difficult of all the Self-denials a *Christian* has to achieve. Happy they, who have made but some progress in it ! being initiated in the Spirit of Meekness, *Christ* begins to reveal himself in them, the Dawn of divine Light appears, their Eyes open, they see in the Perfections of GOD, their Sins, the Redemption of *Christ*, and the Life which is to come, a striking Reality and Importance, which before they were utterly unacquainted with ; Prejudices are losing their Weight before the Sun of Righteousness ; new Determinations ensue, and Peace is coming to dwell with the Soul. It behoves us all to be more experimentally sensible of the natural Blindness of our Minds. We have learnt this Lesson but in part. Through remaining Pride and Dependence on our own Reasonings, our Day is cloudy, Perplexities frequently exercise our Minds, we see confusedly the Way of Salvation, we

are not enough open to Conviction, gain little from the Light of others, and neither the Directions of Scripture have half their Clearness, nor its Promises half their Power.

2. CONSIDER Pride as “boasting itself of “Man’s Merit,” and persuading us to believe the shameful Lie, that we are *something* before GOD. Here the whole Success of Pride depends upon its hiding from us our sinful Hearts: for our Hearts once laid open, the Cheat is discovered, we find ourselves *nothing*, we cry out, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*. And Pride has a Variety of things to present us with, that make a fair shew. These it sets before us in the point of view most for its purpose. We see ourselves in a glaring false Light, our Faults are undiscovered, we appear what we are not, and are led along in a dreadful Ignorance of our real Condition. What a goodly Figure do Civility, Sweetness of Temper, Generosity, Humanity, and Liberality make, when seen through the Glass of Pride? If to these you add Sobriety, Temperance, Chastity, Honesty, with a competent Degree of Regularity in religious Appointments, the Man is ready to fall down in Self-worship, looks with Scorn on the viler part of Mankind, and says in himself, with the deepest Self-approbation, *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other Men are*. Mean-time, all the horrible

rible Iniquity of a sensual, earthly, devilish Heart, lies unnoticed ; manifold daily Defects in every thing are unseen, or compounded for by these fine *Appearances* of Good ; self-deceiving Comparisons are continually made ; when the Law of God is considered, the whole *Spirituality* of it is hid from the Eyes ; a false Humility, that looks on all Profession as Ostentation, serves well to cloak the Course of Compliance with the Ways of a sinful World ; and that most convenient Word *human Frailty*, without which the Pride of Man's Righteousness could not hold up its Head one Hour, perpetually silences the Remonstrances which Conscience makes against this and that *evidently sinful* Action ; or, if the Offence passes the Bounds of this Remedy, a little Concern for a Day, and a strong Resolution, shall effectually heal the Wound, and leave the Mind easy, as if nothing were amiss. By Arts like these, Pride (for that works at the bottom of them all) has kept many in the grossest Ignorance of their Sins, and presuming upon God's Favour in the Merit of their own Doings ; even while with their Mouths they are confessing *Forgiveness of Sin* to be their glorious Privilege, are owning themselves *miserable Sinners*, and in the most importunate Terms calling upon God to *have Mercy upon them*. While Pride carries many all this Length,

it will not be thought strange, that it prevails with some to advance a Step farther ; having kept them ignorant of their Want of a Saviour, if they are brought to deny his Atonement, to throw down thereby all Christianity from its Foundation, and to render it a mere moral System.

THE humble Man cannot be so deceived. He traces the deep-rooted Apostasy of his Nature in the Retrospect of all his Life, and feels its baleful Influence every present Hour. He laments the Loss of the divine Image, which his Soul has suffered, and bewails the Power of indwelling Sin mixing itself with and defiling the Purity of every Thought, Word, and Work. Self-convinced by incontestable Evidence, he disclaims the Pretence of Merit in his best Services, for he sees they have none ; what is good in them being shamefully short of what the holy Law of GOD requires, and even that little Good defaced and deformed by abundance of Self and Sin. He can find no one Action of his Life, of which, absolutely considered, he can say, " Herein GOD can take Pleasure." He bears upon the Record of his Conscience many Days and Things, in respect of which he can only say, *It is of the Mercies of the Lord I am not consumed.* What he merits, he judges to be Hell ; and thinks of GOD's looking upon him in Love, as the sole Effect



fect of infinite, inconceivable Compassion. He is aware of the secret Insinuations of Pride, at every turn whispering *Well done* to his Heart, disclaims the evident Lie, and proves it such upon the Testimony of his whole Heart and Life. More might be added, but the Difference is sufficiently discernible. It were well, if we could make it out with equal clearness in Practice: if from an inwrought, settled Judgment of our real Sinfulness we had shaken off the Impositions of Self-opinion, if we abhorred the Compliments made us by a flattering Heart, and were unhurt by the well-meant Approbations of too fond Admirers. It were well, if the Consciousness of our Vileness were so continually with us, as to keep us always lowly in our own Eyes, maintaining that happy Temper of Spirit, which submits to Affliction, receives with Thankfulness the continual Distributions of divine Bounty, and waits with Patience for every heavenly Gift. But,

3. CONSIDER Pride as “vaunting itself  
“of Man’s Strength to do Good.” Indeed  
all Conceit of any such Strength in Man is  
utterly inconsistent with the Supposition of  
the Apostasy of his Nature. For if the  
Scripture Account of Man’s sinful Nature  
before produced, be allowed, this Point is  
decided; Man has not the least Ability of

his own *to will or do* any thing good ; Pride gives up the Cause, and the impotent Creature is brought on his Knees to cry for Power from on High. But Pride is not hasty to make such Concessions. It will try every Art, and by *disowning*, or *softning*, or *concealing* the Apostasy of our Nature, will impose upon us more or less, and maintain in us an avowed or unseen Dependence on our own Sufficiency. With how much Success these Attempts of Pride are attended, any one will judge, who has attained unto spiritual Discernment. He remembers a Day, when, ignorant of his own Weakness, and of the powerful Interest Sin had within him, he dared to go out unassisted against the Enemies of his Soul. He remembers, how perpetually he was driven back, though, as he then thought, he put his Confidence in the Arm of the Almighty, and cried earnestly for his Succour ; how he gained no real Advantage, nothing even looking like Victory, but what was obtained under the Influence of Pride : for Pride will mimic Grace, and do much that has the Appearance of it. Disappointment, frequently repeated, brought him to suspect there was a Party against him within. He saw the Apostasy of his Nature : and then he saw the Vastness of the Work to be done, no less than the Transformation of his whole Heart. He despair-  
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ed of any Help from himself, and Pride was confounded. He called upon the Lord, and was set at Liberty. He stands now, while thousands fall beside him, who are ignorant as himself once was, of their own Insufficiency, and are trusting to their own Strength, while unmeaningly they ask the Grace of God.

BUT you will not find Pride always acting in so covert a manner, and content merely with imposing upon us. You may observe it pushing on those, whom she keeps blinded in the Conceit of the Sufficiency of their own Powers, to soften or deny the Apostasy of Man: to soften it to a mere nothing, by helping out Inexperience with false Glosses on Scripture; or to deny it, by ascribing the Propensities to Sin to Custom and Education, disowning the Reality of our being born in it, and fashioning a System of pretended religious Principles, which, as they result from the Pride of an apostate Nature, will never have any Quarrel with it, or be forward to believe there is any such thing. Hence the Pride of Man's Sufficiency triumphs in our Day. Hence so little of vital *Christianity*. Hence the great Doctrine of Regeneration, and an inward Change, is either ascribed to a mechanical Operation in Baptism, so that we need look no farther for it, or forgotten, as insignificant, or exploded as enthusiastical. Hence Formality passes for

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Piety,

Piety, and Faith in *Jesus Christ* is become a mere Speculation. Hence outrageous Vice carries its Head aloft, and Licentiousness is not a whit ashamed. The Ax is not laid to the Root. The deep Apostasy of Man is not opened, and Religion is well-nigh dwindled into lifeless Forms, dry Morals, and deistical Inventions. And thus it will be, till the delusive Coverings of Pride being taken away, we see in us that Nature which is apostate from GOD, and therein the Necessity of our return, and our Inability to effect it.

THE Reverse of all this constitutes an essential Branch of the Character of Humility. And what that Reverse is, is too evident to be much insisted on. Were the Delusions of Pride utterly taken away, you would see your real Self, and would renounce the Thought of any Sufficiency in you. The evident Sight of what you were, would shew you indeed what you should be, but would convince you that you could not make yourself what you ought to be : you would be sensible, that even the Discovery of what you were, could be ascribed to no Powers of your own. You would be sensible, that the Work lying before you, was utterly impracticable without a divine Assistance ; and would immediately give up all Hope of it in Despair, were not that Help offered you ; you would venture upon nothing unsupported by Almighty



mighty Grace, and would ascribe all your Conquests to it alone.

P A R T III.

**T**HUS at length we are come at the proper Character of the *Proud* and the *Humble* in respect of GOD. And it is evident, that under the one or the other we all rank. Wherefore it will behove us to weigh with Attention GOD's invariable Method of dealing with the *Proud* and the *Humble*, which is now to be considered under the fifth Proposition.

“ WHILE we are insensible of our apostasy, GOD *resists* us ; when we are sensible of it, he *gives* us Grace.” This is manifestly asserted in the very strong Expressions of the Text. GOD *resisteth* the Proud, *αντιλασσεται*, sets himself in battle-array against them. It imports, that he regards them as Persons in Arms against his Government, and that he actually confronts them as Rebels. *Giving Grace* must be understood in a Sense alike general and extensive, and consequently must imply the Communication of all divine evangelical Good-will toward fallen Creatures, who have thrown down their Arms, and submitted themselves.

THOSE, who in the Pride of their Hearts are insensible of their apostate State, GOD regards as Rebels, has no special Favour for them as such. While in their own Account they are *some great thing*, and fancy they can produce sufficient Proofs of their being so; in GOD'S Account they are Rebels, blind, guilty, impotent Apostates; too wise to be taught, too good to be forgiven, too strong to be succoured. The Fall made them Rebels, delusive Pride keeps them in Rebellion; and with all the specious shew they make, GOD observes they have not submitted, neither returned unto their Allegiance, nor owned their departure from it. He, the Searcher of Hearts, sees them, safely wrapt up as they are in their own Conceits, standing out in present actual Rebellion. He sees, that they are this Day Usurpers of his Throne in self-government; arrogant Despoilers of his Glory in the Account and Use they make of his Gifts; Seekers of worldly Honour, or Praise, or Ease, or Interest in the whole Bent of their Spirits, as having all their Prospects of Security and Enjoyment shut up in visible things; hypocritical Dissemblers with *him* at least, being without all Truth and Honesty in the Services they pretend to pay him; Lovers of Sin, and Haters of GOD, in the very Bottom of their Hearts; remorselessly insensible to any godly Sorrow

Sorrow for whatever Sin they have done against his Majesty and Glory; stubbornly disregarding his Judgments threatned against Sin, or insolently disputing the Justice of them; untouched by his Patience, displeased at his providential Distributions, wishing there were no GOD; in reality, living without GOD in the World: and all this, notwithstanding the Appearances they have of Religion. In a word, GOD sees them lying in their State of natural Apostasy, in his Account they are actual Rebels in Arms, as such he regards and treats them. They remain under the Forfeiture made in *Adam* of all divine Favour and Blessings. GOD is against them. His Wrath is upon them. The Fear of Death galls them. They have not Grace to enjoy any thing they have with true Comfort. Through want of Grace, they turn all their Possessions into Curses. However it fares with them in their temporal Concerns; in those that are spiritual, GOD is their Enemy. He leaves them in Blindness, Hardness, and Impenitency of Heart; they lie asleep in the Lap of Secularity; they are torn in pieces by the Rage of ungoverned Passions and Appetites, anxious Covetousness, desponding Envy, furious Resentment, impatient Ambition, insatiate Inclination; they live to no better purpose, than, by adding Sin unto Sin, to prepare for them.

themselves greater Damnation. Every way the Displeasure of an unreconciled resisting GOD is manifest in them. Their Offerings are an Abomination, their Prayers do not enter Heaven, their Liberalities are not accepted. They do these in the Pride of an apostate Heart; wherefore GOD is against them: they do but *sow the Wind and reap the Whirlwind*. This, and whatever beside is included under the Terms *Wrath* and *Indignation*, is comprehended in GOD's *resisting the Proud*.

THE *Humble* are as much, on the other part, Objects of GOD's Compassion and Love. *To this Man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word*. Poverty of Spirit is the Qualification for *the Kingdom of Heaven*. And no sooner does any one of us, GOD's prodigal Children, come to himself, but Mercy comes to meet him. It is not thro' want of Mercy in GOD, but through our Pride, that any Difference subsists between him and us: do we humble ourselves, he lays aside his Displeasure. Let the whole Scripture bear witness, if there is not Forgiveness with GOD; and a Multitude of Passages in it, if that Forgiveness does not belong to the *Humble*; Forgiveness, with all the delightful Blessings that accompany it. *God giveth Grace to the Humble*; evangelical Favour



Favour in its whole extent is theirs. To the apostate Sinner that lies in deep Abasement of Spirit, conscious of his Guilt, acknowledging his Desert of every Judgment, helpless in himself and helpless, hardly presuming to ask the Mercy without which he is for ever undone, GOD giveth *Grace*; Grace in all its Largeness, comprehending Pardon, Reconciliation, Adoption, Sanctification, Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. There is not a greater Distance between GOD and the Proud, than there is intimate Union between him and the Humble. If GOD be not determined to cast off apostate Man without Remedy, and that he is not; and if yet he cannot receive us continuing obstinate, he will certainly do so when we confess our Sin, and are willing to submit. There is Grace provided for fallen Man, which, if it cannot be conferred on some, because they do not believe they want it, it will be granted to those that have found they do, if any Use is to be made of it at all.

THIS sad Condition of the Proud, and happy Estate of the Humble, may well engage us to enter seriously into the Consideration of this great point, the Apostasy of our Nature, in a practical Way. And,

1<sup>st</sup>, I MAY ask, "Are you unacquainted  
"with your natural Apostasy from GOD?" I  
will suppose you are; and, for the present, that  
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your unacquaintedness with it arises from a Rejection of Scripture Revelation, or from a Denial that the Scripture represents Man as an apostate Creature, or from a careless Neglect of Inquiry whether you are an Apostate or no, because you have no Concern about your Soul. In the last of these Cases, the Ignorance of our apostate State is evidently wilful, and will be allowed, on all hands, to be inexcusable. But is there not Reason to suspect somewhat of Carelessness also in the former two? Have the *Infidel* and *Socinian* made a candid and unprejudiced Inquiry? Have they fairly examined the Scripture, and honestly made search into their own Hearts? Their manner is to charge us with Prejudices; we only request, that they be not influenced by Prejudice; and, for the sake of indulging certain evil Propensities, which we insist are in their Nature, that they will not industriously set themselves to prove there are no evil Propensities in their Nature. We wish them well rid of their destructive Errors, on their own Account, and that they may not any longer stand in the Way of the Salvation of others. We beg nothing but a fair Hearing, not before us, but in their own Minds. We do not desire them to subscribe to our Authority; we desire they will subscribe to no Authority, but Self-conviction, according to the Word of God. All we ask, is a candid Inquiry, and a Guard against hasty Con-

Conclusions, that can avail nothing which soever way they are made. We fear such an Inquiry has not been made; and till it be, we have a Right to intreat, and insist, that nothing be vented against the Truth of a Point, where-with the Honour of GOD, and the eternal Interests of Mankind, stand so nearly connected.

WE cannot but be sensible, that many of those, who decry the Scripture Revelation, or deny that the Scripture represents Man as an apostate Creature, have made no sober Inquiry about the Matter, being manifestly without all Principle: and we suppose, that they, who have made some Inquiry into it, may have been detained from a thorough Search, by a secret Unwillingness to receive a Doctrine so mortifying to Self-sufficiency as this is, and which would lay them under Obligation of restraining their Inclinations.

GRANTING we have Principles of Sin naturally in us, the Desire of gratifying them will be natural; and accordingly, when we should set ourselves to inquire, whether the Principles of Sin were in our Nature or not, the very Desire of gratifying them would not be without its Weight to determine us for the Negative, since the Acknowledgment of such Principles would be confessing the Obligation of restraining them, and bringing ourselves under the Necessity of declaring War against our whole Nature. Upon the Supposition therefore of  
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our Apostasy, we must needs have a vast Prejudice to struggle against in deciding this point, we must naturally wish we may not find ourselves apostate; and how easily we are persuaded, by the slightest Arguments, to believe what we wish, every one knows. It is evident from hence, that in determining, whether we are apostate Creatures or not, the very Possibility that we may be so, should be diligently observed, as a Counter-balance to the Influence, which must arise from the Desire of gratifying the Principles of Sin within us, if we are so. Without this Caution we cannot do ourselves Justice in our most important Interests. But whether all this Care has been taken by those, who deny the Apostasy of Nature, we must leave themselves to determine. Without question, the Subject is of such Importance, as to challenge Care; and to treat it with Levity, is to trifle with God and our Souls. If we are apostate Creatures, there is but one Remedy for us; nor can we gain any thing by a rash Decision that we are not Apostates, but in the Neglect of the Remedy to perish. If we are Apostates, and there is no Help for us but in the Gospel; for the sake of escaping the Charge of Apostasy, to jest ourselves out of Belief of the Scripture, or address our Wit to force the Scripture to speak a Language, more favourable to our Pride and Inclinations, and more accommodated to the bad Temper of the Times,



Times, and our Ease and Interest in the World, than that of our being in an apostate State, is but to fall upon the Art of hoodwinking our Eyes, that we may not see ourselves sink into the bottomless Pit.

BESIDE these there may be others, neither thoughtless in Matters of Religion, nor in Speculation Adversaries to the Doctrine of original Sin, who notwithstanding in Practice may be as much Strangers to it as the former. The Persons meant are they, who having been accustomed to external Observances, and preserved from the grosser Acts of Sin, have stopt there, and looked no farther. Harmless and holy in their Thought of themselves, they have not suspected the Iniquity of an apostate Heart; have made no Account of a Love of Pleasure or of Ease, Ambition or Covetousness, Pride or Censoriousness, that raged within; and their Complaints on the Score of Imperfection have risen no higher than a lifeless Spirit, and wandering Heart in Devotions. Here, the Depths of inward Sin being unknown, and the outside bearing an innocent Appearance, they have lived in a wretched Mistake of their real Condition: never convinced of their being guilty before GOD, they have made no other than an unmeaning Use of the Atonement of *Christ*, and of that Institution, which is designed to shew it forth, and to seal its Benefits: and never finding the Want of an inward Change, they

they have but asked the Spirit because they were bid to do so, not from any Desire of his Operations to beget and promote in them the new Nature, to mortify and kill their corrupt Affections. What a Pity, that they should have laid out so much Time and Pains about their Souls to no better Purpose! that, with so much looking well, they should never yet have engaged in a reasonable and spiritual Religion; and that under so many external Duties the Rottenness of a depraved Heart should have remained unmolested, and in the full Exercise of all its deadly Power because unsuspected!

2dly, I MAY address this matter also to the *bumble*. All of us have a great deal still to learn of this important Lesson. You may have gone far in Speculation, and may be able to display with Perspicuity the Twinings and Labyrinths of the human Heart: but is your Knowledge of yourself as practical as it is distinct? has it brought you to renounce all Dependence on your own Wisdom, Righteousness, and Strength? Permit me to lay before you some obvious Remarks on each of these Heads.

ARE you sensible as you ought of your natural *Blindness*, insomuch that you duly subject your reasoning Powers to the divine Teaching of the Word and Spirit? You may easily know what Progress you have made this way by submitting to the following Inquiries. Does God's Word so perfectly satisfy you, that  
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whatever Declaration you find there absolutely determines your Judgment, and leaves you under no remaining Doubt or Suspicion? If this be your Case, and it holds out in all Circumstances, it is well. But if, notwithstanding the evident Declarations of Scripture, your Mind is still exercised with Reasonings, *How can these Things be?* if you seem as it were desirous of some other Testimony besides God's *Scripture-witness*; if what you find there be so high above you, that you know not how to come into it, and are hesitating to give your Assent; if, for instance, you stick at such a word as this, *God justifieth the Ungodly*, because you see not how such a thing can possibly be; such Misgivings manifestly arise from the Pride of your own Reason. Nor will you think yourself entirely divested of that Pride, if, regarding your Dependence on the Spirit for divine Illumination in the Truths of Scripture, you forget to look for and ask his Aid; can either hear or read the Word of God without Application for his Presence to lighten your Darkness, or in your Addresses to the Throne of Grace, are endeavouring (as you may find to be the Case not unfrequently) to reason yourself into a Belief of the Promises that are in *Christ Jesus*, without any immediate Respect to the Light of the holy Spirit, as if Faith were not the Gift of God, and by the sole Use of your own Powers you could attain such a  
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convincing Discovery of the Gospel-Salvation; as would satisfy the Mind, and give Life to every practical Principle in the Heart. Again,

ARE you enough sensible of your *Sinfulness and Guilt*? Have you learnt to put no manner of Trust in any thing you do? Do you verily judge it all, the very best of it, unworthy of GOD; and that the character of a miserable Sinner is that only which belongs to you? As far as this is the practical Judgment you have formed of yourself, you will have no Confidence at any time to come before God, or to expect any thing from him, but through and for the sake of the Redeemer; you will be altogether patient in waiting God's Leisure to receive his Bounties of Grace and Providence, and however distressing your present Circumstances, you will not cherish one murmuring Thought as if you were made to wait long; you will never think you are hardly dealt with whatever betides you; and sensible you are *less than the least of all the Mercies* God bestows upon you, Gratitude will be the Temper of your Spirit, and your Mouth will be filled with Thanksgivings and Praises. Deficiency in any of these points argues a Defect in Humility, and proves that Pride has not suffered us to go to the bottom of our real Guilt and Sinfulness. Also,

ARE you practically sensible of your own *Weakness*, so that you have let go all Dependence



ence on your imaginary Strength? Is it always plain before your Eyes, that left to yourself you must fall under every Temptation? It will follow, that in every Temptation you look up for the Strength of GOD to support you. And do you judge you can do no good thing unless divine Grace enable you. Why then do you enter upon so many Duties without taking that Grace with you? You are not sufficient for any thing of yourself, it is allowed; and therefore you ought to refer the Praise of every good Thought, Desire, Word, and Deed to GOD who is the Author of it. Yet, do you always give back the Glory of all unto GOD? or do you never find yourself boasting as if *You* had done somewhat? In short, will your constant Attention to all the Means of Grace, your Importunity in the Use of them, and your abiding Distrust of yourself, witness for you that you have no longer any degree of Confidence in your own Strength?

IF we will measure ourselves rightly, it must be by our Practice, not our Speculations. And in this view I am very sensible every humble Man will own he needs to be more humble, more disengaged from the lying Artifices of a proud Nature, and that he is not yet come to the Bottom of his Blindness, Guilt, and Impotency. Wherefore,

*Lastly,*

*Lastly*, WE should all endeavour to be more humble, that is, more sensible of the Reality of our fallen State. To our Defect in this we owe our Darkneſs and Ignorance in Things of eternal Conſequence; our importuning Fears hanging heavy on the Soul, leſt its Intereſt in GOD, and the future World, be not ſecure; together with any meaſure of Victory which rebellious Nature gains over us. The faithful GOD gives to the Humble the enlightening, comforting, and ſtrengthening Grace of the Goſpel; and if we receive it not in all its Fulneſs, it is only becauſe we are not enough diſpoſed for it by Humility. Let us not think we have no more to do with Humility, as ſoon as ſome Change appears upon us. It is this *Humility* that muſt be the Foundation of all to the End of Life.

PRIDE will be leſs and leſs capable of holding up its Head, as the Circumſtances of our fallen State are better known. Let Obſervation therefore both of the paſt and preſent teach us: We may uſefully reflect on the Days when our Underſtandings were held in a dreadful Ignorance of ſpiritual Things, or in dangerous Errors concerning them; and may add to the Account our preſent dim-ſightedneſs, that aſſiſted as we are by the Word and Spirit, we ſee but *as through a Glaſs darkly*, and are extremely apt to miſtake the Scriptures, con-  
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founding the Light which the Spirit throws upon them by our own Reasonings and Imaginations. All our Pains will be well laid out in making larger Discoveries of our Sinfulness, Guilt and Misery ; in tracing back the Footsteps of our apostate Nature to our tenderest Years, and in marking all the Features of it as they have appeared in advancing Life ; here its Carnality, here its Worldliness, and here its devilish Pride, Ambition, Envy, and Resentment, are manifest ; and here its Hatred of GOD, its Affectation of Independency in a Series of Conduct wherein we pleased ourselves, and slighted the Will of GOD. How guilty ! How undone without Mercy !

LET us consider also if sinful Nature be not still the same, equally averse to GOD, alike sensual, earthly, and devilish ; that we may learn more of our Insufficiency to all Good. We should endeavour to see more distinctly how the Seed of all Sins is this Day wrapt up in our natural Hearts, ready to burst out every moment, and that left to ourselves we could only lead an animal Life, in the utmost possible Indulgence of our bodily Inclinations, and the most violent Rage of our spiritual Lusts. Researches of this kind will have the happiest Effect upon the natural Pride of our Hearts to bring it low, and in the Advances of Humility to fit us for Gospel Grace ; to  
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enhance the Worth of JESUS in our Estimation of him, and to cause us to regard him as more eminently lovely ; to put us more out of love with a Life the Concomitant of which must be a detested sinful Nature, and to quicken our Desire of that better State where Sin shall be no more, and where *waking in God's Likeness we shall be satisfied* ; to inspire us with higher Sentiments of Gratitude towards a redeeming GOD, and with deeper Commiseration of our Fellow-Apostates ; and in the united Influence of Gratitude and Pity, to animate us in a Conduct calculated to promote the Glory of GOD, and the spiritual Welfare of Men. Happy they who thus know themselves in any measure ! Most happy such as have gone farthest in Self-knowledge ! Neither spare your Pains, nor remit your Diligence in this Search ; for he, who *resisteth the Proud*, hath said, *he giveth Grace unto the Humble*. This, my Friends ; this humble Path is the Way to Glory.

*The End of the FIRST DISCOURSE.*

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✠ The Author intends to publish more of his DISCOURSES, if this is found of Service to the Cause of vital Religion.



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